

## William Berkeley Lewis to Andrew Jackson, May 3, 1835, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### MAJOR WILLIAM B. LEWIS TO JACKSON.

Nashville, May 3, 1835.

. . . . Mr. Austin has commenced repairing your house, and expects to complete his part of it in two or three weeks. The walls are perfectly sound, and the foundation has received not the slightest injury. They are at work now upon the windows, which is rather a tedious operation, and will not be got thro' with before the last of this week, even if the 24 weather should prove good: they are of very pretty size and proportion, and will look much better than the old ones. Indeed I think the house will be greatly improved both as regards its interior arrangement and exterior appearance. It is believed the whole building can be completed early in the fall, at least this is the opinion of the workmen.

I was much gratified at the fine and healthy appearance of your son. Both Col. Love and myself thought he looked like a different person. I have no doubt he has faithfully complied with his promise to you, to the letter. I spoke to him in relation to the matter about which you and myself talked the day before I left the city. I told him how unhappy it had made you, and that unless he desisted in course so injurious to himself and distressing to his family and friends, it might, and I feared *would* shorten the period of your existence. He was much affected, and said that he was resolved to stick to his promise. I hope he will, *and I really think he will* . He is a young man every body esteems, and if he will only have resolution to stick to his promise, he will soon become a universal favourite. . . .

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In your letter, in reply to mine from Baltimore, you say you are willing to do any thing to gratify me that you can with propriety do. I never have, my dear Genl., desired any thing, knowingly, that was improper, and I never *intend* to do so. Therefore if the request I have made be improper, I am the last man that would insist on its being complied with. But really, for my part, I cannot see the least objection to the Government sending out a special agent to receive and remit to this country the twenty five millions of francs, so soon as the French government shall pay it. I differ with the Secretary in the opinion that this business can only be transacted by a Banker. I believe I can do it as well, as satisfactorily, and as *safely* as any Banker, not excepting even the Rothchilds. The secretary thinks, too, that none but a Banker can afford to do it at a half percent. If a Banker can afford it why not another person? I believe it would be a very snug job, and it would be of great service to me. If I am deputed for that purpose, I should certainly make the remittance in gold or silver; and I should like to make it in one of our *National ships*, which could easily pass by Havre on its return from the Mediterranean to the U. States. Mr. Toland, assured me that if the agency were given to me that he would go to France with me, and assist in transacting the business without fee or reward. Now, without the imputation of vanity, I think he and myself could attend to this business, and transact it as well, as the Rothchilds, or any other Bankers in Europe or America. With regard to the Security I apprehend no difficulty. if there be no difficulty in appointing the agent, there will be none in giving security. However, I shall be with you by the first of June, or at farthest the middle, and I hope until then nothing will be done. I know Mr. Pageot as well as myself is pretty hard run, but I shall make an effort to relieve them before I leave here, and am in hopes of being able to do so.

I must beg the favour of you again to present my best and kindest regards to Mr. Earle, and believe me to be,